

Prompting Language

What is a Prompt?

- An adult prompt is a signal to the child to do or say something.
- There are four types of prompts, with different levels of adult support:
 - Time delay (waiting for 5 seconds)
 - An overt nonverbal cue for the child to use language
 - The adult uses an expectant look and waits for the child to verbalize before performing the expected action or giving the child a desired object.
 - This offers the least language support.
 - Open questions (e.g., “what do you want?” “tell me what you want.”)
 - The adult asks an open question (i.e., no single correct answer).
 - This offers a little more support by verbally cueing the child to verbalize his or her requests.
 - Choice questions (e.g., “dog eats or dog drinks?”)
 - The adult asks a choice question that has no single correct answer
 - This offers even more support by including the answer in the question.
 - Model procedure: “say _____”.
 - The parent tells the child exactly what to say “say _____”
 - This offers the most adult support as it tells the child exactly what to say.

What to Prompt?

- Your child’s communication targets:
 - Target 1: noun (e.g., cat)
 - Target 2: verb (e.g., eat)
 - Target 3: proterverb (e.g., in)
 - Target 4: request (e.g., help, again)

Why Prompt Language?

- Gives children an opportunity to practice language targets during a highly motivating context.
- Gives the child functional practice and reinforcement for communication.

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How to Prompt Language?

- Wait for your child to request OR use an environmental strategy (time delay) to elicit a request.
- Choice Question: Adult uses EA choice making strategy to set up the request
 - Use the choice EA strategy (hold up 2 items).
 - Wait for the child to respond (if no response, abandon the prompt since the child isn't interested, but don't give either object)
 - If the child does not use a target, say " _____ or _____"
 - If the child still doesn't say the target, give model ("say") up to 2 times if the child doesn't use a target.
- Open Question: Child requests or adult uses another EA strategy (other than choice) to set up the request.
 - Wait for the request or use an EA strategy (all but choice) to get a request
 - Say "Tell me what you want?" or "What do you want?"
 - Wait for the child to respond or wait 5 seconds if no response.
 - If the child does not use a target, say "say _____"
 - Give model ("say") up to 2 times if the child doesn't use a target
- Stop prompting after your child says exactly what you wanted him to say.
- Give your child enough time to respond (5 seconds) before giving another prompt.
- Prompting episodes should always result in the child receiving the object or action.
- After your child has said what you wanted OR you have given two model prompts
 - Expand if he has said the target
 - Repeat if he has not said the target

When to prompt language?

- Only when the child is requesting and not using a target.
- Only as one of the many tools (not the only tool) of Enhanced Milieu Teaching.
- No more than three times per minute 15 minute session
 - Too many demands may cause the child to become frustrated.